

MONTANA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Newsline

Published by the Montana Department of Transportation

Public

**Transportation
Guide Released**

The Transportation Planning Division recently published a new brochure designed to help people find public transportation services in Montana.

The "Guide to Public Transportation in Montana" is a product of the recently published Intercity and Rural Passenger Transportation Study. This federally-funded study looked at ways to improve intercity and rural transportation services in areas of Montana where these services are limited or non-existent.

Copies of the two-color brochure have been distributed to transportation providers, bus and train stations, and other high-visibility locations around the state. Anyone interested in obtaining additional copies of the brochure or the study should call Janis Winston at (406) 444-4210 or 1-800-844-2829. ♦

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

OCT 25 1995

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
1515 E. 6th AVE.
HELENA, MONTANA 59620**Construction
Underway on Poplar
Bus Facility**

Construction of the Fort Peck Transportation System bus facility began this summer in Poplar, Montana.

Braden/Pehlke Construction of Glasgow is the general contractor for the project and anticipates having the building finished by this fall.

Eighty percent of the funding for the facility came from the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5309 (formerly Section 3) with the remaining 20 percent provided by the Fort Peck Tribes.

The facility, complete with wash and service bays, will enable the Fort Peck Transportation System to service and maintain their fleet of transit vehicles. These vehicles provide general public transportation throughout the expansive Fort Peck Indian Reservation in northeastern Montana. ♦

PLEASE RETURN

Transit Drivers Compete in 4th Annual State Bus Rodeo

Bus drivers from across Montana competed in the State Bus Rodeo driving competition at Logan Field in Billings on August 13. The drivers spent the day exhibiting their driving skills.



Drivers maneuver vehicles through the obstacle course in the 1995 State Bus Rodeo held in Billings.

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Articles appearing in the Transportation Planning Newsletter are contributed by the staff of the MDT Transportation Planning Division.

MT Department of Transportation
Transportation Planning Division
2701 Prospect Avenue
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001
TDD (406)444-7696 or
1-800-335-7592



The winner of the full-size bus division competition was Roland Weidner of MET Transit in Billings. Weidner will travel to the American Public Transit Association's conference in San Antonio, Texas in October to compete in the national bus rodeo. Wayne Ogger of MET Transit was runner-up, and Steve Leichner also of MET Transit took third.



Roland Weidner of MET Transit, Billings, took first place in the Full-Size Bus Division.

In the paratransit division competition, Wayne Colman of Native American Senior Citizens Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in St. Ignatius took top honors. Colman will be on his way to the Community Transportation Association of America's Exposition and National Paratransit Rodeo in Milwaukee, Wisconsin next spring. Ray Serba of Mountain Line Transit in Missoula placed second, and James Keller of Eagle Transit in Kalispell finished third.



Winner of the Paratransit Division was Wayne Colman, Native Americans Senior Citizens Center, St. Ignatius.



1996 STIP Under Development

The Transportation Planning Division's Project Analysis Section is working on the 1996 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The federally-required document lists all highway, bridge, and transit projects funded with federal highway and transit funds in Federal fiscal years 1996, 1997, and 1998. Funds can't be programmed for these projects unless they're included in the STIP.

The STIP also lists state-funded pavement preservation and maintenance projects, as well as aviation and rail projects. In all, the 1996 STIP includes improvements with a value of over \$580 million in state and federal funds.

As part of the public involvement process for the development of the STIP, the Project Analysis Section, in

Continued on Page 3

cooperation with the Public Affairs Bureau, distributed maps and press releases describing upcoming projects in each district. Draft copies of the STIP were available on request.

The final 1996 STIP will be published later this year and submitted to the USDOT for approval. ♦

Highway Traffic Safety Joins MDT

As a result of legislation passed during the last session, the Highway Traffic Safety Division from the Department of Justice has moved to MDT and is now part of the Transportation Planning Division.

With a new name, the Traffic Safety Bureau is led by Albert Goke and includes Kent Mollahan, Jack Williams, Harry Lauer, Priscilla Sinclair, Freda Toner, and Jue Sing.

The Transportation Planning Division welcomes Albert and his staff to the Department.



♦

New Faces in Transportation Planning

In addition to the staff of the Traffic Safety Bureau, the Transportation Planning Division recently welcomed the following new staff members: Andy Boehm - Project Analysis Section, Bob Barry - Urban Planning, John Fitzpatrick, Charley Fenner - Traffic Operations, and Barbra Proulx, Barbara Morin - Administrative Support. ♦

Public Involvement Processes Detailed

Ever wonder how to find out what's happening with a specific transportation planning issue? Or perhaps you'd just like to express your opinion about a study or program the Transportation Planning Division is involved in. Following is a summary of some of the ways you can participate in the continuing statewide transportation planning process:

1. Quarterly Newsletter

You're reading *Newsline*, the Transportation Planning Division's newsletter. This publication is designed to inform the general public and elected and appointed officials about studies, projects, and issues the Division is working on and let people know how they can become involved.

Currently, we distribute over 4,000 copies of each edition of *Newsline*. We're constantly looking for people to add to our mailing list, so please call if you know of anyone else

who might be interested in receiving *Newsline*.

2. Toll-Free Information and Comment Lines

The Division's toll-free phone line (1-800-714-7296) provides an easy (and inexpensive) way to request information or provide comments. The Division also recently established a Public Transportation Information line (1-800-844-2829) as part of the Department's effort to improve intercity and rural public transportation in Montana.

3. Press releases and/or advertisements announcing availability of special planning products

The Division occasionally publishes special reports addressing specific transportation issues. The Division uses *Newsline*, press releases, the State Bulletin Board System, or newspaper advertisements, to notify the public of the availability and contents of these reports.

4. STIP

The Division's Multimodal Programming Bureau conducts an extensive public involvement process in support of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This annual publication lists all federally-funded transit, highway, rail, general aviation, and enhancement projects scheduled over the next three years. This is your best opportunity to see what's coming up in your area and suggest other projects you'd like to see.

Continued on Page 4

5. **Speaker's Bureau**

The Transportation Planning Speaker's Bureau provides citizens and organizations with an easy way to request speakers on specific transportation planning-related topics. If you or your group would like someone to speak about any topic let us know and we'll arrange it.

6. **Issue or study-specific focus or advisory groups**

Over the last two years, the Transportation Planning Division has used focus and advisory groups for efforts such as TranPlan 21, the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study, Intercity and Rural Passenger Transportation Study, and the Region VIII Rural Transit Coordination Study. The Division will rely on similar groups for critical input from citizens and stakeholders during upcoming planning efforts.

7. **Special Reports**

Occasionally, state and national transportation issues require the development of special reports by the Division. Where appropriate, we mail these reports to groups or individuals interested in the issue or issues addressed. Let us know if you'd like to be added to our mailing list for a specific topic. These reports will also be mentioned in *Newsline*.

In addition to these ongoing public involvement processes, the Transportation Planning Division undertakes additional processes such as phone surveys and public open houses during the biennial evaluation of TranPlan 21.

If you have any questions or comments about any of these processes, please call Dick Turner at (406) 444-7289 or 1-800-714-7296. ◇

What's Happening Around the State?

To keep "Newsline" current with transportation planning-related developments around the state, we need your help. If you are aware of a newsworthy story in your area, please let us know and we'll do our best to publish it in the "Newsline." News stories can be mailed to:

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
SPECIAL STUDIES SECTION
2701 PROSPECT AVENUE
P.O. BOX 201001
HELENA, MT 59620-1001**

Branch Line Improvements Underway

CP Rail System's lessee, the Dakota Missouri Valley and Western Railroad (DMVW), has announced plans to improve 18.7 miles of track on its Whitetail Branch in northeastern Montana. This grain-gathering branch line runs between CP Rail's mainline at Flaxton, North Dakota to Whitetail, Montana, a distance of about 138 miles. Nearly 57 miles are in Montana.

The Montana track rehabilitation project will begin near Outlook (milepost 658.0) to the end of the line at Whitetail (milepost 676.7). The work will consist of tie and ballast replacement.

DMVW plans to initiate the project this construction season with completion scheduled next spring. This is the first phase of an estimated \$3 million project.

Also on the Whitetail Branch, Burlington Northern (BN) is nearing completion on a \$2 million track improvement project between Lignite Jct. and Crosby, North Dakota. This segment of track is jointly owned by CP Rail and BN.

The extraordinary effort of railroads working together to improve this branch line is good news for area grain shippers and Montana's agricultural economy. These projects should aid in eliminating the stockpile of rail cars in Crosby, and improve traffic flow along the line well into the future. ◇

Public Provides Comments on Proposed Rumble Strip Program

During July, the Department asked for public input on a proposed program to install rumble strips on the shoulders of rural highways to reduce "run-off-the-road" accidents.

Over 50 citizens and organizations provided comments on the proposed program. The Department is sifting through the comments and should have a final decision on the program by late fall.

For more information about the rumble strip program, contact Ed Hedlund at (406) 444-0809. ◇



Montana's transportation system has changed considerably since 1879 when this photograph was taken in Wolf Creek Canyon between Helena and Great Falls. Courtesy Montana Historical Society

CTEP Progress Report

Over 200 Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) projects have been selected by local communities and are under development. Following is a summary of completed projects and projects that are nearing completion.

COMPLETED PROJECTS:

City Hall Sidewalks - Stanford
Cascade County Courthouse - Great Falls
Landscaping - White Sulphur Springs
Charlie Russell Trail Brochure

PROJECTS NEARING COMPLETION:

City Park Walking Paths - Baker
Milwaukee Rd. Right-of-Way Preservation - Missoula
Bike/Ped Path - Stevensville
Airport Landscaping - Butte
CMR Museum - Great Falls
Fort Peck Theatre - Fort Peck
Main Street Sidewalks - Richey
Archway & Trees - Lewistown
Sidewalks - Park City

For more information on these or other CTEP projects, call Mike Davis at (406) 444-4383 or Ed Hedlund at (406) 444-0809.

Transportation Planning Division Telephone Numbers

Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call the toll-free number **1-800-714-7296** (in Montana only), or **(406) 444-3423** and your call will be directed to the appropriate individual.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon)	444-3143
CTEP (Mike Davis)	444-4383
Mapping (Joe O'Neil)	444-6119
Projects (Jeff Ebert)	444-7639
Rail Planning (Jan Vogel)	444-4262
Secondary Rds. (Gary Larson)	444-6110
Statistics (Rick Rogne)	444-6111
Traffic Safety (Albert Goke)	444-7301
Traffic Statistics (Dennis Hult)	444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston)	444-4210
Urban Planning (Ross Tervo)	444-3445



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2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena Montana 59620-1001
(406) 444-3423
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